

Office of the Secretary,  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M St. NW  
Washington DC 20554

CS 97-55  
CABLE SERVICES BUREAU

MAR 3 1997  
FCC  
CS Docket No. 97-55

MAR 6 9 32 AM '97/20/97

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Dear FCC,

We appreciate the opportunity to file this formal comment concerning the ratings system recently implemented by the television industry.

It is our view that the age-based system that has been adopted by the television industry is not adequate to accomplish the goal for which it was implemented. There are several ways that an age-based system fails, and we would like to draw your attention to two of them.

The first problem is that it is administered by the television industry itself. If the goal is to protect our children from explicit sex, violence, and language content, then the public would be well served by having an independent body overseeing this function. We cannot reasonably expect "the fox to guard the hen house". Whatever ratings system is implemented, it must be administered by those who have the best interests of America's children as their motive. The television industry is incapable of rating the content of their own productions, because profit is their primary motive.

Secondly, a poor ratings standard is worse than no ratings system at all. The current age-based system gives no guidelines concerning the offensive *content* of the shows. If we don't specifically address what is offensive in a given show's *content*, then all we are doing is giving the television programmers a shield to hide behind when consumers are offended at what television contains. The age of the viewer is relatively insignificant at this point. Offensive content is offensive content, for adults as well as children. There should be no double-standard.

Instead of the current age-based system, a better plan would be a content-based system administered by individuals who are fully independent of TV production and profits, who have high moral and ethical standards which flow from the Judeo-Christian faith upon which this nation was founded.

Traditionally, parents have been the primary filter for protecting America's youth from inappropriate TV viewing. In view of the relatively weak state of the modern American family, it becomes all the more important for the FCC to implement TV ratings which truly offers *all* viewers protection from the daily bombardment of explicit sex, violence, and language which characterizes much of current television programming.

The best solution is for the television industry to quit broadcasting explicit sex, violence, and language. Until that unlikely event happens, it is up to good and moral people to prevail in this effort of determining what is appropriate for public television viewing.

We urge the FCC to implement content-based ratings, which afford Americans the *most* protection possible.

Sincerely,

*Leonard R. Belsaas*  
*Virginia R. Belsaas*  
Leonard & Virginia Belsaas  
8526 East U.S. 20  
New Carlisle, IN 46552

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Sincerely,

*Terry L. Fifer*

Terry L. Fifer  
5425 North Burkhart Rd.  
Howell, MI 48843

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CABLE SERVICES BUREAU

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February 24, 1997

RE: CS Docket No. 97-55

Office of the Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street NW  
Washington DC 20554

Dear Secretary,

As the father of 9 children, 34 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren I wish to comment on the TV ratings code.

I do NOT favor the present age-based ratings code. It is wholly inadequate in informing parents of the what their children may or may not see on any given program.

It is my opinion that a TV ratings code should contain information as to the content of the program, that is "sexual content", "nudity", "profanity", "violence" and so forth.

Thank you for considering my suggestions.

Sincerely,



William Askew  
P. O. Box 11460  
Springfield MO 65808

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Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M St. NW  
Washington DC 20554

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Sincerely,

*Mr. & Mrs. Jim Belford*

Mr. & Mrs. Jim Belford  
1648 Britton Drive  
Schererville, IN 46375

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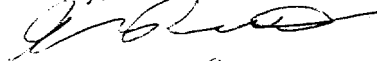
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Sincerely,

  
Linda Beckett

Garry & Linda Beckett  
14689 Stonington Court  
Granger, IN 46530

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